PROFESSIONAL LEARNING, COLLABORATION, LAND, AND THE INTEGRATION OF INDIGENOUS PERSPECTIVES AND KNOWLEDGE INTO THE BRITISH COLUMBIA K-12 CURRICULUM: WHAT CAN BE LEARNED FROM STÓ:LŌ EDUCATORS?

by

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Abstract

The recent provision of a framework by the BC Ministry of Education that supports the integration of Indigenous perspectives and knowledge within curriculum has created both opportunities and challenges for educators. In reviewing literature related to decolonizing processes in education and the recent history of Indigenous education locally and nationally, and by using document analysis to analyze the unpublished academic writings of three Stó:lō scholars and educators, themes of professional learning through collaboration with Indigenous communities that involves Indigenous narrative/story, Indigenous and settler colonial history, and connectedness to Land have emerged. It is apparent that engaging in ongoing professional learning and direct collaborative communication with local Indigenous communities is the best way to ensure that the redesigned curriculum will be implemented in a respectful, appropriate, and authentic way. To facilitate this, educators must look back to the historical, pedagogical, and cultural context of Indigenous education in BC so that they may move forward toward authentic integration of Indigenous perspectives and knowledge in the curriculum.

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Glossary

Aboriginal Peoples

This plural noun, used in the Constitution Act of 1982, includes the Indian (or First Nations), Inuit and Métis Peoples. Aboriginal Peoples of Canada are defined in the Constitution Act, 1982, Section 35 (2) as including the Indian, First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples of Canada.

First Nation(s)

First Nation is a term used to identify Indigenous peoples of Canada who are neither Métis nor Inuit. This term came into common usage in the 1970s to replace the term “Indian” and “Indian band” which many find offensive. First Nations people includes both status and non-status Indians.

Indian

“Indian” is the legal identity of an Indigenous person who is registered under the Indian Act. One story about the origin of the term “Indian” dates back to Christopher Columbus, who mistakenly thought he had reached the East Indies, so referred to the people in the lands he visited as “indios” which is Spanish for Indian.

Indigenous

A collective noun for not only Canadian First Nations, Inuit, and Metis individuals, but for all people who suffer under settler colonialism world-wide.

Introduction

Purpose

In 2015 the British Columbia (BC) Ministry of Education began the implementation of its redesigned kindergarten-to-grade-twelve (K-12) curriculum. A notable addition was the requirement for educators to integrate Indigenous perspectives and knowledge into all areas of the curriculum, and at all levels of education. In the context of nearly thirty years of formal province-wide treaty negotiations and three national commissions (Royal Commission on Aboriginal People, 1996; Truth and Reconciliation, 2015; and Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, 2019), this addition was essential and long overdue. However, despite the provision of a curricular framework by the BC Ministry of Education that supports the integration of Indigenous perspectives and knowledge within curriculum, educators in the K-12 school system have been provided with little in the way of guidance and resources to effectively and ethically support teachers to authentically integrate culturally-appropriate Indigenous curriculum and pedagogy. Thus, while the redesign of the curriculum creates new opportunities for educators, it also creates challenges – not the least of which is how to move forward in a respectful way that forefronts Indigenous voices, perspectives, priorities, and messaging. Therefore, the goal of this paper is to assist educators by providing them with guidance and direction derived from the unpublished writings (PhD dissertations and MA thesis) of leading Stó:lō educators.

The BC Ministry of Education's redesigned curriculum offers a framework for the integration of Indigenous perspectives and knowledge, and an acknowledgment of the need to incorporate "Aboriginal voice and perspective by having Aboriginal expertise at all levels,

ensuring that Aboriginal content is a part of the learning journey for all students, and ensuring that the best information guides the work" (BC Ministry of Education, 2015). This aspect of the redesigned curriculum presents teachers with a mandate to provide all students with opportunities to "understand and respect their own cultural heritage as well as that of others" (BC Ministry of Education, 2015). This approach affords educators with opportunities to navigate beyond the channels charted by Eurocentric pedagogy which has steered education in British Columbia since the creation of publicly funded education, and to authentically explore and engage with the socio-cultural perceptions and knowledge of Indigenous Peoples. This can be challenging for educators who are either comfortable with the existing system or who feel intimidated and/or apprehensive about the challenges associated with integrating Indigenous perspectives and knowledge into their classrooms. To achieve authentic integration, and as a means of centering Indigenous perspectives and knowledge, it is my informed opinion that educators must begin a process of locating themselves within the Indigenous pedagogical, cultural, and historical context of the people in whose territory they practice.

Context

As a contract researcher and consultant, I have had the opportunity to work with regional school districts, post-secondary institutions, the Stó:lō Research and Resource Management Centre, and several Stó:lō First Nations. Most of my work includes education research, curriculum and resource development, and assisting to increase capacities for supporting the wellness of youth in Stó:lō communities. In this work, my connections and interactions with the K-12 education system are mainly with public school educators, where much discussion occurs regarding the integration of Indigenous perspectives and knowledge within the redesigned

curriculum. Drawing on my training as a high school teacher and my past work experience in secondary schools, I have found myself in a position where I can utilize my understanding of the policies and procedures of the public school system to initiate change externally. Additionally, as a non-Indigenous person working closely with Stó:lō First Nation communities, I strive to position myself as an ally, coming alongside to provide support toward efforts to bring authentic and lasting change in education for the ongoing benefit of Indigenous people. My hope is that my perception of the integration of Indigenous perspectives and knowledge will be recognized by educators as constructively critical and beneficial.

My lived experience inevitably shapes and informs the central academic work of this project: distilling and amplifying the voices, insights, and perspectives of three Stó:lō women intellectuals and educators on the subject of the integration of Indigenous perspectives and knowledge into the BC K-12 curriculum. The Stó:lō women I have selected are Dr. Gwen Point, Dr. Jo-Ann Archibald, and Erica Jurgens. My methodology is a close reading and analysis of their unpublished academic dissertations and thesis writings. My goal, in short, is to communicate the common lessons and teachings that are contained in these writings in order to create a resource that educators can turn to as they begin their journeys towards collaboratively building and implementing curricular content that authentically integrates Indigenous perspectives and knowledge.

Research Question

In the presentation of this analysis, I consider the following question: What can be learned from the writings of Stó:lō education leaders that can be used by educators to support the integration of Indigenous perspectives and knowledge into the BC K-12 curriculum within S’ólh

Téméxw? I ask this question because the current approach to the integration of Indigenous knowledge and perspectives, attempted by a largely non-Indigenous population of educators, may not be a sufficiently authentic and integrous approach to achieving representation. My aspiration is to identify commonalities and direction, while remaining sensitive to tensions and contradictions, within the graduate thesis writings of Dr. Gwen Point, Dr. Jo-ann Archibald, and Erica Jurgens.

This question is important to me because the answer to it forefronts authenticity and integrity, professional learning, and relationships. My lived experience and research lead me to believe that Indigenous perspectives and knowledge should be represented in an authentic manner to all K-12 learners throughout the BC curriculum. And, as an imperative, the approach to meeting this outcome must align with the learning principles and goals of the Indigenous communities who are being represented.

Literature Review and the Scholarly Significance of My Study

I begin my analysis by placing my research questions within the context of the relationship between Indigenous peoples and the government of Canada – and the educational inequities that resulted from that relationship for Indigenous students.

The significant gap in the academic achievement of Indigenous students compared to non-Indigenous students has prevailed since the establishment of western schooling systems across Indigenous territories in what is now known as Canada (National Collaborating Centre for Aboriginal Health, 2017, p. 2). Mi'kmaq author and educator Dr. Marie Battiste (2013) invites Indigenous and non-Indigenous Canadians to consider the experiences of Indigenous peoples who were forced to attend various colonially-imposed educational systems as part of Canada's

assimilation policies and colonial agenda, recognizing that "their heritage and knowledge [were] rejected and suppressed, and ignored by the education system" (p. 23). The effects of these attempts at forced assimilation and racially targeted educational policies are still evident in public school systems and throughout Indigenous populations within Canada today (National Collaborating Centre for Aboriginal Health, 2017, p. 2). While the disparity in educational achievement between Indigenous and non-Indigenous students in British Columbia has improved in recent decades, the gap continues to persist (National Collaborating Centre for Aboriginal Health, 2017, p. 3) despite the best efforts of individual educators and the BC Ministry of Education.

The Education Gap: How Did We Get Here?

There are a variety of historical and contemporary factors that contribute to this education gap. The Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (1996) reports that throughout history and across regions in what is now known as Canada, a "single pattern dominated the education of Aboriginal people… Formal education was, without apology, assimilationist" (p. 408). The *United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues* (2012) reports on several key areas which affect Indigenous peoples world-wide. In particular, the forum states that a lack of "educational materials that provide accurate and fair information on indigenous peoples and their ways of life" and "ethnic and cultural discrimination at schools" pose significant challenges for Indigenous students (United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues [UNPFII], 2012). Further, the forum indicates that Indigenous students are in "danger of losing part of their identity, their connection with their parents and predecessors and, ultimately, of being caught in a no man's land whereby they lose an important aspect of their identity while not fully becoming a part of the dominant national society" (UNPFII, 2012). This type of disconnection from

personal identity serves as a barrier to achievement in education, and is thought to occur when Indigenous students attend schools where they are only exposed to the "national discourse at the expense of their native discourse" (UNPFII, 2012). This lack of sense of personal identity is juxtaposed to, and yet perpetuated by, occidental education systems which promote and foster "individualism and a competitive atmosphere, rather than communal ways of life and cooperation" (UNPFII, 2012).

A history of coercive and assimilationist policies within the western education system is recognized as a significant contributor to the cause of the disparity in achievement between Indigenous and non-Indigenous students within BC's K-12 education system (National Collaborating Centre for Aboriginal Health, 2017, p. 3). In response to this history, there have been several concentrated movements and publications within and outside of the public education system: *Indian Control of Indian Education* (1972), *Shared Learnings: Integrating BC Aboriginal Content K-10* (1996), *First Nations Control of First Nations Education* (2010), and the *Truth and Reconciliation Commission Report* (2015), to name a few. These efforts have each called for and contributed to the incorporation and inclusion of Indigenous perspectives and knowledge within the K-12 curriculum in BC.

Closing the Gap: Where Do We Go?

A particular concentrated effort which addressed aspects of the disparity in achievement between Indigenous and non-Indigenous students is the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, which took place between 2007 and 2015 and was funded by the Government of Canada (Government of Canada, 2019). This commission was established in response to the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement and was initiated by a large group of former students and family members of former students who attended Indian Residential Schools in Canada

(Government of Canada, 2019). The findings of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission were then documented in a six-volume final report which was released to the public in December of 2015 (Government of Canada, 2019). The report's executive summary included 94 "calls to action" which are a set of recommendations "to further reconciliation between Canadians and Indigenous peoples", four of which call on the federal, provincial, and territorial governments to work together with "[residential school] Survivors, Aboriginal peoples, and educators" to implement recommendations numbered 62, 63, 64, and 65 under the subtitle *Education for Reconciliation* (Truth and Reconciliation Commission, 2015). Each of these four recommendations addresses an area of need within the K-12 education system which has been identified through the work of the commission. In particular, recommendation number 62 calls on the aforementioned people groups to:

i. Make age-appropriate curriculum on residential schools, Treaties, and Aboriginal peoples' historical and contemporary contributions to Canada a mandatory education requirement for Kindergarten to Grade Twelve students.

ii. Provide the necessary funding to post-secondary institutions to educate teachers on how to integrate Indigenous knowledge and teaching methods into classrooms.

iii. Provide the necessary funding to Aboriginal schools to utilize Indigenous knowledge and teaching methods in classrooms.

iv. Establish senior-level positions in government at the assistant deputy minister level or higher dedicated to Aboriginal content in education. (Truth and Reconciliation Commission, 2015).

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission "calls to action" listed above are a response to the disparity evident in Indigenous education achievement across Canada. Responding to these calls,

educators throughout BC have begun, and in many cases, continue to work to implement the integration of Indigenous perspectives and knowledge within schools and school districts with the goal of "improving school success for all Aboriginal students" (BC Ministry of Education, 2016). BC's redesigned curriculum has presented educators with a new approach to the incorporation of Indigenous perspectives and knowledge by *requiring* that "the voice of Aboriginal people be heard in all aspects of the education system; the presence of Aboriginal languages, cultures and histories be increased in provincial curricula; and leadership and informed practice be provided" (BC Ministry of Education, 2016). The redesigned curriculum requires educators to make a fundamental shift in their approach to the inclusion of Indigenous perspectives and knowledge in K-12 classrooms. Thus, to be effective in its implementation, the redesigned curriculum also needs a fundamental shift in approach: an approach that is grounded in authentic leadership and informed by meaningful connection to Indigenous people, communities, and Land. Given this need for authenticity, I turn to the literature on authentic leadership to consider ways in which educators can use this theory as they shift their approach.

Authentic Integration Requires Authentic Leadership

As leaders at the forefront of the work of integrating Indigenous perspectives and knowledge into the K-12 curriculum, BC educators must be cognizant that their approach to integration is congruent with the goals of integration: "improving school success for all Indigenous students" and ensuring "that all learners have opportunities to understand and respect their own cultural heritage as well as that of others" (BC Ministry of Education, 2021). For many educators, this means developing in their understanding of integration by moving toward meaningful engagement with Indigenous perspectives and knowledge through connections to Indigenous people that enable educators to engage with Indigenous stories, Indigenous and settler colonial

history, and ultimately to be able to learn with and through Land. To this end, authentic leadership theory can provide a theoretical framework to guide educators toward authentic integration.

In authentic leadership theory, three different perspectives are presented. Authentic leadership can be understood as *intrapersonal*, with focus on the leader; *interpersonal*, with focus shifting out and away from the leader; and *developmental*, in which leadership is experienced as an ongoing process, developing throughout one's lifetime (Northouse p. 196). Authentic leaders exhibit characteristics relating to their understanding of their purpose, strong values, trusting relationships, self-discipline, and passion (Northouse, 2016, p. 197). In light of this, the value of authentic leadership for the promotion and support of the integration of Indigenous perspectives and knowledge in the K-12 curriculum in BC can be seen as an imperative. However, to be effective in this area, educators who adopt the characteristics of authentic leadership into their pedagogical approach must ensure that all three perspectives (intrapersonal, interpersonal, and developmental) are present at once – and are interconnected in order to meaningfully engage with Indigenous perspectives and knowledge.

Educators who aim to promote and support the integration of Indigenous perspectives and knowledge in the curriculum as a means to reconciliation and to bridging the education achievement gap for Indigenous students in BC must first be concerned with the *intrapersonal* aspects of authentic leadership. Specifically, educators need to consider their own "self-concept" (Northouse, 2016, p. 196) in relation to Euro-Indigenous historical and contemporary relations, particularly within the realm of education. Non-Indigenous educators should know or seek to understand how they may be complicit in the perpetuation of assimilationist attitudes that are rooted in Canada's colonial history. The educator who has included the characteristics of

authentic leadership into their pedagogical approach should reflect on and seek meaning in their own experiences within the K-12 education system, and on their experiences with or as a member of Indigenous communities (Northouse, 2016, p. 196): the meaning derived from these personal experiences can help form and inform educators' core beliefs. In addition to being *intrapersonal*, educators must also be *interpersonal*, responsive to "interactions between [themselves and their] followers" (Northouse, 2016, p. 196). The *interpersonal* aspect of authentic leadership theory necessitates humility and reciprocity as "leaders affect followers and followers affect leaders" (Northouse, 2016, p. 196). These qualities are essential for educators who aim to develop and grow in their recognition or understanding of the roots of the disparities affecting Indigenous students in the BC education system. Finally, educators who aim to promote and support meaningful and authentic integration of Indigenous perspectives and knowledge in curriculum must engage in lifelong personal and professional learning, continually seeking opportunities to engage in personal and reciprocal, or collaborative, learning. In the context of this research, a distinction must be made between professional development and professional learning. Whereas one may consider professional development to be limited to attending obligatory sessional workshops and day-long training events where educative content is packaged and delivered to educators, professional learning can be thought of as providing "continual learning and social contexts for teacher change – not "one and done workshops" (Sawyer, Stukey, 2019, p. 3). This is not to discount the value that may be inherent in one-time professional development and training opportunities. Educators who strive to include the characteristics of authentic leadership into their pedagogical approach should, however, compare and contrast the often fragmentary and disconnected nature of professional development workshops with the ongoing growth and progressive approach that defines professional learning,

and which offers educators opportunities to extend their learning beyond one-stop workshops and into an everyday practice of reflection and reflexivity leading to pedagogical and educational transformation (Easton, 2008; Sawyer & Stukey, 2019). This would be in line with the approach to learning laid out in the First Peoples' Principles of Learning (FPPL), a set of nine "learning principles specific to First peoples" that were developed by the BC Ministry of Education and the First Nations Education Steering Committee (FNESC) in 2008 (Chrona, 2016). Two of these principles directly relate to the rationale behind professional learning: "Learning is holistic, reflexive, reflective, experiential, and relational focused on connectedness, on reciprocal relationships, and a sense of place; [and], Learning involves patience and time" (FNESC, 2008).

Land as Pedagogy and First Teacher

Interestingly, all three aspects of authentic leadership theory are represented within these principles. The FPPL, a representation of many Indigenous ways of knowing, doing, and being, can help guide and direct educators who aim to engage with and promote Indigenous perspectives meaningfully and authentically within the education system. The *intrapersonal, interpersonal,* and *developmental* aspects of authentic leadership theory are complemented by the work of Michi Sasgiig Nishnaabeg scholar, Dr. Leanne Betasamosake Simpson, who encourages educators to consider traditional Indigenous ways of teaching and learning, and to recreate the "conditions within which… learning occurred, not merely the content of the practice itself" (Simpson, p. 9). This call to recreate, or allow space for, traditional learning systems requires that educators develop an understanding of "land as pedagogy" (Simpson, 2014, p. 1). Simpson (2014) states that:

> Like… leadership and every other aspect of reciprocated life, education comes from the roots up. It comes from being enveloped by land. An individual's intimate relationship

> with the spiritual and physical elements of creation is at the centre of a learning journey that is life-long (p. 9).

Referring to Land as "first teacher", teacher education researchers Korteweg and Fiddler (2018) describe Land as "knowledge source and pedagogy", providing space for the interconnection of "elements, ancestors, more-than-human animals, spirits, language, and stories" (p. 266).

Thus, educators who aim to promote and facilitate the integration of Indigenous perspectives and knowledge into the curriculum in an authentic way are encouraged to first recognize Land as pedagogy and Land as teacher. Educators should engage with Indigenous perspectives on Land as pedagogy *intrapersonally*, reflecting on their own position in relation to the Land, *interpersonally*, engaging in a reciprocal teacher-learner relationship with the Land and those belonging to it, and *developmentally*, participating in a life-long journey of reflection and reciprocity in relation to the Land. In doing so, educators can contribute to the progressive, forward-thinking, and ongoing work that has been carried out by Indigenous education leaders over the last four decades locally and nationally, leading to a number of significant changes in educational policy and curricular implementation for the benefit of all learners. Certainly, my experience as a contractor working for Stó:lō organizations and people has reinforced for me the centrality of Land in Indigenous curriculum reform and integration.

Historical Context – Looking Back

As a means of providing educators with an historical context within which to situate the integration of Indigenous perspectives and knowledge into the BC curriculum, the next section of this literature review will include an overview of Indigenous efforts toward the resumption of jurisdiction over Indigenous education nationally, as well as the Stó:lō Nation's determination to provide education to Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples locally. While not an exhaustive

historical account, I will provide brief summaries of important changes in governmental policies that have affected Indigenous students and have also had an impact on curriculum more broadly. Key events and decisions related to Indigenous education in Canada between 1972 (the year First Nations in BC released their manifesto *Indian Control of Indian Education*) and 2016 (the year the BC government mandated Indigenous perspectives and knowledge into all K-12 curriculum) demonstrate the ways in which Indigenous educators and educational leaders, locally and nationally, have worked to lead the BC Ministry of Education toward the authentic integration of Indigenous perspectives and knowledge.

Indigenous Peoples Efforts Toward the Resumption of Jurisdiction Over Their Education

In May 1972, members of the National Indian Brotherhood Education Committee met to develop a joint policy statement that would serve to reflect commonalities between the existing provincial statements on education developed by provincial and territorial "Indian organizations" (Assembly of First Nations, 1972, p. iv). This joint policy statement outlined the committee's educational philosophy, their proposal for local control over education, the role of the federal government, and, most importantly, their perceptions of a culturally-relevant curriculum that reflected traditional and cultural values, including "attitudes of self-reliance, respect for personal freedom, generosity, respect for nature, and wisdom" (Assembly of First Nations, 1972, p. 2). Ideally, these values would be communicated through language instruction, the creation of cultural education centers, specialized training for teachers and counsellors, and expectations for facilities and services. This document also summarized issues presented by the process of integration, which in an educational context in 1972 was defined as "the closing down of Indian [residential] schools and transferring Indian students to schools away from their Reserves, often against the wishes of the Indian parents" (Assembly of First Nations, 1972, p. 25). Further, the

authors present a summary of their position on education, asserting that "the Federal Government must adjust its policy and practices to make possible the full participation and partnership of Indian people in all decisions and activities connected with the education of Indian children" (Assembly of First Nations, 1972, p. 27). In this way, the National Indian Brotherhood Education Committee was asserting their inherent right to resume jurisdiction over the education of their children.

In December 1972, this policy was presented to Jean Chrétien, then Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, by the General Assembly of the National Indian Brotherhood (Assembly of First Nations, 1972, p. iii). In 1973, the Minister officially recognized the publication as a "significant milestone in the development of Indian education in Canada" (Assembly of First Nations, 2010, p. 6), approved the proposals set out in the policy paper, and committed the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development to implementing them (Assembly of First Nations, 1972, p. iii). However, the 2010 publication *First Nations Control of First Nations Education*, an updated version of the 1972 *Indian Control of Indian Education* policy document, argues that "the full spirit and intent of the policy has never been supported in a meaningful manner by federal, provincial or territorial governments" (Assembly of First Nations, 2010, p.6). Instead, the federal government responded by merely relinquishing a portion of their control over the administration of community schools, and allowing First Nations "some degree of involvement in the delivery of programs that had previously been managed by the federal government" (Assembly of First Nations, 2010, p.6). The federal government's response to the appeal for the resumption of Indigenous jurisdiction over Indigenous education was to transfer a "modest level of control [to] local communities" (Assembly of First Nations, 2010, p.6). However, without the federal government's provision of the resources required to

implement that control, First Nations were unable to fully realize jurisdiction over their education as stipulated in the policy (Assembly of First Nations, 2010, p.6).

Still, in the wake of the gradual cessation of the residential school system, and in "response to the 1969 *White Paper* which called for the dissolution of the reserve system and total assimilation of First Nations people" (Assembly of First Nations, 2010, p.6), the 1972 policy served as an important impetus for gradual but meaningful changes in educational policy throughout Canada – changes which would take place over the next several decades and are still being realized today. In a continued effort to resist assimilationist attitudes and policies evident in the integration of Indigenous students into non-Indigenous schools, Indigenous leaders recognized jurisdiction over their education as imperative to cultural survival. However, these changes would not take place without significant political lobbying by the National Indian Brotherhood, later known as the Assembly of First Nations, on behalf of Indigenous peoples across the nation.

Although not yet recognized in educational policy nor mandated in curriculum, Indigenous knowledge and perspectives were still being represented and communicated in some classrooms in BC. In particular, in the late 1970s, the Stó:lō Sitel Advisory Committee developed curriculum that not only reflected a traditional Stó:lō approach to education but was also culturally appropriate and valued by Stó:lō communities. This curriculum was implemented in five school districts and was centred around "similarities between Stó:lō and non-Stó:lō children" (Clapperton, 2006, p. 73). Though not mandated by any political organization to create such resources, the advisory committee recognized the need for culturally-relevant content to be integrated into existing curriculum in schools within Stó:lō territory.

Other groups and individuals were also active in the creation of culturally appropriate resource materials: examples of which can be found in the 1983 publication, *Success in Indian Education: A Sharing.* Aside from resource and curriculum initiatives, occasional independent endeavours were sustained throughout the 1970s and 1980s, despite the continued absence of provincial government leadership regarding culturally-appropriate and relevant education for Indigenous students, and education on Indigenous histories and perspectives for all students more generally.

Meanwhile, on the national stage, in 1984 the Education Secretariat of the Assembly of First Nations embarked on a national review of Indigenous education that aimed to evaluate "the impact of the 1972 National Indian Brotherhood Policy Paper, *Indian Control of Indian Education*" (Assembly of First Nations, 1988, p. iii). This study, *Tradition and Education: Towards a Vision of our Future*, was also conducted to provide a basis for informed decision-making in the consideration of "the future direction of Indian Education" in Canada (Assembly of First Nations, 1988, p. iii). Over the course of four years, members of the secretariat engaged with "First Nations educators and government, provincial education ministers and other interested parties" (Assembly of First Nations, 1988, p. iii). The study included four main components: "the jurisdiction, quality, management and resourcing of Indian Education" (Assembly of First Nations, 1988, p. iii).

Their findings, based on a number of key conclusions, resulted in the establishment of a proposal for future directions that included fifty-four recommendations stemming from the four main components as outlined by the secretariat. With regards to jurisdiction, the secretariat recommended that First Nations rightfully return to a position of authority "over education affecting First Nations students", whether they be in federal, First Nations, or public schools

(Assembly of First Nations, 1988, p. 31). Concerning quality, it was submitted that "First Nations students have a right to education programs and services of the highest quality which incorporate culturally relevant content and academic skills" (Assembly of First Nations, 1988, p. 33). In terms of management, the secretariat asserted that "the management of First Nations education systems requires at least the equivalent of the financial, human, and material resources required in the public-school systems" (Assembly of First Nations, 1988, p. 35). Finally, with regards to resourcing, it was determined that "the resourcing of First Nations education must be at levels equivalent to that spent on the education of other Canadians in public schools, with additional new funding allotted for the acknowledged special needs associated with First Nations education" (Assembly of First Nations, 1988, p. 37). In 1991, efforts continued in the defence of the inherent right of Indigenous peoples to total jurisdiction over their education. The Report on the "Special Chiefs' Conference on Education" identifies the National Indian Brotherhood's perception of the continued importance of the four main components (jurisdiction, quality, management, and resourcing) with an additional focus on implementation (Assembly of First Nations, 1991, p. 2).

The Changing Perspectives of the BC Ministry of Education

In 1998, the British Columbia Ministry of Education, through its Aboriginal Education Initiative and FNESC, supported a change in the curriculum. This included "integration of authentic Aboriginal content into the British Columbia K-10 curriculum" by providing educators with classroom materials which would enable them to provide students with "knowledge of… BC Aboriginal peoples" (BC Ministry of Education, 1998, p. 6). *Shared Learnings: Integrating BC Aboriginal Content K-10* was developed in an effort to "promote understanding of BC Aboriginal peoples among all students" (BC Ministry of Education, 1998, p. 6). The classroom

materials provided in the publication were created with the intention of including the "support and participation of Aboriginal teachers, Elders, and other knowledgeable members" from a school's local Indigenous community in the classroom (BC Ministry of Education, 1998, p. 6). Though not technically embedded in the provincial curriculum, *Shared Learnings* was successful in creating links between Indigenous content and the existing K-10 curriculum, inferring ways in which the two could be integrated (BC Ministry of Education, 1998, p. 7). As such, *Shared Learnings* served as an effective, albeit optional, resource for educators to use in the planning of their programs.

While *Shared Learnings* may have been the only 'official' resource available from the BC Ministry of Education to support the integration of Indigenous content into the K-10 curriculum, as mentioned earlier in this review, individuals and groups of BC educators, throughout the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s, continued to take it upon themselves to both meet the needs of Indigenous students in the classroom and bring awareness to non-Indigenous students by creating their own educational resources as they saw fit. Educators developed resources independently, for use in their own classroom or to share with others, and in collaboration with organizations such as FNESC. It was FNESC that recognized the "need for a First Nations-controlled collective organization [that was] focused on advancing quality education for all First Nations learners" and who worked to provide support to increase success rates among Indigenous students throughout British Columbia (First Nations Education Steering Committee, 2021). This support was and is demonstrated in a number of ways, including the provision of classroom resource guides for educators (First Nations Education Steering Committee, 2021). More recently, within the last decade or so, support has come through partnering with the BC Ministry of Education in writing curriculum "based on authentic knowledge and understanding,

as articulated by Elders, educators, and other content experts" for courses such as *English 12 First Peoples*, where the First Peoples Principles of Learning were first introduced. (BC Ministry of Education, 2008).

In 1999 the BC Minister of Education signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Assembly of First Nations' Chiefs Action Committee, the federal Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs, and the president of the BC Teachers' Federation (BC Ministry of Education, 2021b). In recognition of the reported lack of success of Indigenous students in meeting expectations within the public school system, "the Memorandum of Understanding led to a framework for the creation of Enhancement Agreements" that were set out to increase educational achievement rates among Indigenous students across BC (BC Ministry of Education, 2021b). From 1999 to 2016, the BC Ministry of Education developed and implemented the Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreements within school districts in an attempt to "increase student success and to bring Aboriginal learning to all students" (BC Ministry of Education, 2021b). The intention of the agreements was to "improve the quality of education achieved by all Aboriginal students", to help build and maintain good relationships between Indigenous communities and school districts, and to "provide Aboriginal communities and districts greater autonomy to find solutions that work for Aboriginal students, the schools and the communities" (BC Ministry of Education, 2021b). As of 2016, the BC Ministry of Education is no longer involved in the development and implementation of Enhancement Agreements, leaving Indigenous communities and school districts to approach this task as they see fit (BC Ministry of Education, 2021b). Though these agreements did not effect change in curriculum directly, more support was made available for Indigenous students and for Indigenous education among the wider student population.

The Role of Stó:lō Communities and Stó:lō Organizations in Local Education

Acting as a foundation for these and many of Stó:lō Nation's other educational efforts, the Coqualeetza Education and Training Centre was fully established in 1979 to "complement, not duplicate, the formal education system, as well as create a place which was community oriented for social and economic progress" (Clapperton, 2006, p. 65). The centre served several purposes, including cultural education (Clapperton, 2006, p. 65). Early on, courses were provided to enhance "basic training skills emphasizing English, mathematics, science, public speaking, parliamentary procedure… multi-media drama, and a homemaker training course" (Clapperton, 2006, p. 66). Efforts were also made to preserve Stó:lō heritage through the recording and transcription of "Stó:lō chants and songs" and the storage of cultural artifacts which had been repatriated (Clapperton, 2006, p. 66). From its inception, Coqualeetza's educational efforts worked toward dispelling "the history that had been written largely by and for a Euro-Canadian audience" (Clapperton, 2006, p. 66). In support of this effort, Halq'emeylem language classes and "studies of Stó:lō art, music, lifestyles and history" were offered to Stó:lō community members (Clapperton, 2006, p. 66). These educational offerings continued, and in 1983 the Coqualeetza longhouse was built to provide a traditional place to teach "Stó:lō culture and language" (Clapperton, 2006, p. 69). Though the longhouse was used for Stó:lō ceremonies, it was eventually used primarily as a teaching longhouse, "to teach grade-school students, mostly grade four" (Clapperton, 2006, p. 71).

Teaching elementary school students in this manner began to take place in 1976 and was the result of the recognition of the high demand from school districts to have Stó:lō Nation staff present the Stó:lō Sitel curriculum in classrooms throughout five school districts (Clapperton, 2005, p. 17). It was, in part, a response to a new provincial curriculum introduced in 1994 which

placed, for the first time, “particular emphasis on learning about local First Nations” while also recognizing the importance of “First Nation’s history, thought and experience” (Clapperton, 2006, p. 73).

The Ministry of Education’s “Targeted Aboriginal Funding” initiative in the mid-1990s was a major step forward in placing greater control over Indigenous education in the hands of Indigenous individuals, parents, and organizations. Each school district was provided with over $1,000 per Indigenous student, but were told that they could not spend the funds without the informed consent of Indigenous parents and communities. Gwen Point, Education Program Coordinator for the Stó:lō Nation, worked with six Fraser Valley school districts to create local Advisory Committees to oversee the targeted funding budgets, co-designing programs and staff hiring with school district administrators in order to ensure that the funds were being spent in a meaningful way. Working closely with her colleague Dr. Keith Carlson, Research Coordinator at the Stó:lō Nation, Point was able to secure funding to create new teacher resources, and commitments that the school districts would implement and use them. Key among these were the publications *You Are Asked To Witness: The Stó:lō in Canada’s Pacific Coast History* (1997) and *I am Stó:lō! Katherine Explores Her Heritage* (1998) – both of which were published by the Stó:lō Heritage Trust. Teacher’s guides were created to accompany these books, and a series of professional development opportunities were arranged for teachers. Each school district also had an appointed leader who would ensure that the resources were available to individual schools. Importantly, the targeted funding was also used to create an educational interpretive centre called Shxwt’a:selhawtxw, meaning “the house of long ago and today,” to support the work of the Longhouse Extension Program on the Stó:lō Nation grounds in Chilliwack. A priority of Shxwt’a:selhawtxw was “to show people that the Stó:lō are not static objects of a generalized

past, in contrast to provincial history textbooks" (Clapperton, 2006, p. 77). All grade 4 students in the Fraser-Cascade, Chilliwack, Abbotsford, and Langley school districts were bused to visit the centre yearly; there, in addition to viewing exhibits that were designed to complement the contents of the published books, the students were also led through a series of hands-on learning activities and storytelling circles where Stó:lō knowledge-keepers interacted directly with the teachers and students. The resulting Longhouse Extension Program worked, and continues to work, "to present Stó:lō culture as living and dynamic" (Clapperton, 2006, p. 78).

Still in frequent use, Shxwt'a:selhawtxw underwent a major renovation and reorganization in 2017 with funding from a federal *Canada 150* grant. This grant facilitated the renewal of the interpretive centre building and the reorganization of its contents. While the contents were previously organised by activity (i.e. fishing, basket making etc.), the contents are now arranged according to Stó:lō seasons and moon cycles. This layout provides visitors with a general understanding of the various seasonal activities and ceremonies that are important to Stó:lō communities.

Other educational efforts organized by Stó:lō Nation included the Xá:ytem Longhouse Interpretive Centre (Xá:ytem). While operational, Xá:ytem provided education about Stó:lō history and culture to school-aged students as well as to the general public. Xá:ytem, like the Longhouse Interpretive Centre on the Stó:lō Nation grounds, also provided grade four and grade seven students from several local school districts with opportunities for "hands-on cultural and archaeology" experiences through school tours and activities (Gleboff, 1998, p. 19). These are just a few examples of Stó:lō Nations' continued efforts to provide education to both Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples. Over the last four decades the efforts of the Stó:lō Nation and other Stó:lō organizations, demonstrated in the development of resources and programming made

available to local school districts, have provided learners with opportunities to learn about Stó:lō perspectives and knowledge at prescribed points in the BC K-12 curriculum. Next, I provide an overview of how, during this same time, a number of factors have worked together to provide a framework to allow for the integration of Indigenous perspectives and knowledge into every grade level and into all subject areas in the BC K-12 curriculum.

The Integration of Indigenous Perspectives and Knowledge into BC's Curriculum

In 1972, the National Indian Brotherhood Education Committee asserted that Indigenous children "will continue to be strangers in Canadian classrooms until the curriculum recognizes Indian customs and values, Indian languages, and the contributions which the Indian people have made to Canadian history" (Assembly of First Nations, 1972, p. 26). As well, they were acutely aware that "the success of integration is not the responsibility of Indians alone", emphasising that non-Indigenous people "must be ready to recognize the value of another way of life; to learn about Indian history, customs and language; and to modify, if necessary, some of their own ideas and practices" (Assembly of First Nations, 1972, p. 26).

A number of voices and factors have worked together since 1972 that have resulted in the creation of BC's redesigned curriculum. Nearly 40 years after the publication of *Indian Control of Indian Education*, the call for the return of jurisdiction over Indigenous education is just as loud as it was in 1972. In 2010, the Assembly of First Nations published a revised version of the 1972 document called, *First Nations Control of First Nations Education*. This updated version was created to "assist governments and First Nations communities in building the requisite policies, programs, services and systems to ensure the future prosperity of First Nations peoples in Canada" (Assembly of First Nations, 2010). In 2016, Canada announced its adoption of *The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (UNDRIP) which was

published in 2008. Article 14 of this declaration asserts the pre-existing rights of Indigenous peoples concerning the establishment and jurisdiction over "their educational systems and institutions", and states that "States shall, in conjunction with indigenous peoples, take effective measures, in order for indigenous individuals, particularly children… to have access… to an education in their own culture and provided in their own language" (United Nations Division for Social Policy and Development, 2008, p. 7). In 2012, the *Truth and Reconciliation Commission* (TRC) put forth 94 "calls to action", several of which are related to education (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2015, p. 7). Specifically, the commission implored "federal, provincial, and territorial governments" to collaborate with "Survivors, Aboriginal peoples, and educators to …make age-appropriate curriculum on residential schools, Treaties, and Aboriginal peoples' historical and contemporary contributions to Canada a mandatory education requirement for Kindergarten to Grade Twelve students" (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2015, p. 7). Furthermore, it called for Canadian Ministers of Education "to maintain an annual commitment to Aboriginal education issues" which included the development and implementation of "Kindergarten to Grade Twelve curriculum and learning resources on Aboriginal peoples in Canadian history, and the history and legacy of residential schools" (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2015, p. 7).

A response to these calls to action can be seen in BC's redesigned curriculum, which began to be implemented in 2016. The BC Ministry of Education's curriculum website offers an overview of this redesigned curriculum where it is acknowledged that since 2006 Indigenous content has simply been included in a few courses, whereas the redesigned curriculum "builds on what has been learned and extends Aboriginal perspectives into the entire learning journey, rather than into specific courses or grade levels" (BC Ministry of Education, 2021a). As such,

proponents of the redesigned curriculum consider that it is effectively "Indigenized" in that "from Kindergarten to graduation, students will experience Aboriginal perspectives and knowledge as part of what they are learning" (BC Ministry of Education, 2021a). The embedding of Indigenous knowledge and worldviews was an intentional effort on the part of those who were involved in redesigning the curriculum. The "curriculum teams included Aboriginal representation" and the writers viewed the curriculum material through the lens of the FNESC's First Peoples' Principles of Learning (First Nations Education Steering Committee, 2021).

The redesign of BC's K-12 curriculum takes one of many necessary steps toward the modification of the BC Ministry of Education's ideas and practices. This modification is an important step towards the fulfillment of the assertions of the 1972 policy, *Indian Control of Indian Education,* specifically the imbedding or integration of Indigenous perspectives and knowledge into the curriculum. Presently, it remains to be determined whether the integration of Indigenous perspectives and knowledge throughout the BC curriculum may prove to be a turning point in the long history of a colonial governmental bent on the obstruction of Indigenous people's ability to remain self-determining regarding the education of their children.

Decolonizing and Wayfinding – Looking Forward

Mi'kmaq author and educator Dr. Marie Battiste highlights the importance of education for the intergenerational transference of knowledge (Battiste, 2013, p. 104). She asserts that modern curriculum, sanctioned and standardized by those who hold power, presents "one mainstream, a culturally imperialistic stream that ignores or erodes, if not destroys, other ways of knowing or the accumulated knowledge of some groups" (Battiste, 2013, p. 104). In order to facilitate authentic learning experiences that allow for learners to recognize and engage with a diversity of Indigenous perspectives and knowledge, educators must work to recognize the force

that is the mainstream and determine a way to lead so as not to perpetuate the erosion of that which is to be integrated. To do the work of recognition and wayfinding, educators need to be able to locate themselves within the historical realities and future potentialities of Indigenous education. This requires the challenging, personal, and necessary work of decolonizing, stepping out of the mainstream, and engaging with other ways of knowing. This process can begin and be carried on through professional learning.

Decolonizing Requires Deconstructing and Reconstructing

Regan (2010) identifies the difference between decolonization and integration, stating that the former "involves a paradigm shift from a culture of denial to the making of space for Indigenous political philosophies and knowledge systems as they resurge, thereby shifting cultural perceptions and power relations in real ways" (p. 189). This paradigm shift requires educators to at once adopt a practice of deconstructing and reconstructing their perceptions of "Indigenous knowledges, languages, ways of knowing, and histories… [and challenge] Eurocentric assumptions, curriculum, and teaching methods" while leading other educators in the curricular integration of Indigenous perspectives and knowledge (Hall & MacMath, 2018, p. 94).

Battiste (2013) uses the metaphor of a fast-moving river's keeper current to describe the process of decolonization within the context of mainstream education. She states:

> Decolonization then is a process of unpacking the keeper current in education: its powerful Eurocentric assumptions of education, its narratives of race and difference in curriculum and pedagogy, its establishing culturalism or cultural racism as a justification for the status quo, and the advocacy for Indigenous knowledge as a legitimate education topic (Battiste, 2013, p. 107).

This process of decolonization is, for all educators, a pedagogical practice of deconstructing and reconstructing required for the authentic integration of Indigenous perspectives and knowledge within BC's redesigned curricular framework.

Challenging mainstream assumptions is not the only approach to a decolonizing process. Pete et al. (2013) reflects on the relationship between Indigenizing and decolonizing, noting that the two work "hand in hand" (p. 103). Pete et al. suggests that while educators must challenge mainstream curricula, they must also do the work of "affirming the relevance of Indigenous knowledge" (p. 103). Pete et al. continues on to explain Indigenization in the context of education as "re-centering Indigenous knowledge ways in the core of… instructional practices", which results in the decentering of Eurocentric ways of knowing (p. 103). Drawing on the writing of Marie Battiste, Borden et al. (2018) identify the decentralization of "Eurocentric assumptions" (Battiste, 2013, p. 186) as an educators' response to "the calls to decolonize education" (p. 235).

Another perspective on decolonizing education is presented by Francis et al. (2020) who put forward the perspective that "not all practices need decolonizing", and that educators should not engage in "decolonizing practices that ignore the question of what needs to be decolonized in the first place" (p. 193). A response to this assertion is offered in the suggestion that educators participate in critically reflective decolonizing processes and relationships (p. 193). While this viewpoint does not necessarily offer a stark contrast to the more commonly-found perspectives of challenging mainstream ways of thinking as a means to decolonizing education, it does present educators with the invitation to participate in a process of critically reflective decolonization. As suggested by Hall and MacMath (2018), "teachers' decolonizing work begins

with deconstruction" which requires educators to ask important questions of themselves in order to continue on toward reconstruction (p. 94).

Creating Space for Decolonizing Relationships

Battiste (2013) considers the need to create space for Indigenous and non-Indigenous people to speak truthfully to one another about "predicaments and issues that face them and the standards they speak for" (p. 105). She continues on to explain that this space is a necessary "foundation for a first encounter between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples" (p. 105). Daniel Wildcat (2001) helps to further inform readers' perspectives on the importance of Indigenous and non-Indigenous relationships within the context of decolonizing education when he explains that, "with respect to culture, a person can have only the most superficial understanding of a people, especially their culture, if it is based primarily on the written word and only limited direct experience of their everyday lives" (p. 18). With this in mind, Wildcat identifies the prevalence of a superficial understanding of Indigenous cultures by non-Indigenous people (p. 18).

The pervasiveness of the misunderstanding of Indigenous communities among non-Indigenous educators can lead to the latter perceiving the former from a "deficit point of view" (Borden et al., 2018, p. 244). In this context, decolonizing education would mean that non-Indigenous educators would begin to consistently view Indigenous communities "from an asset perspective and as a potential place of curriculum-making and relationship-building" (Borden et al., 2018, p. 244). This ideal view of decolonized education is further conceptualized by the notion that "when we let go of the idea of an educator being all knowing, an expert at everything, and we take the opportunity to learn from as opposed to learn about Indigenous people, authentic

and engaging curriculum changes can take place" (Borden et al., 2018, p. 244). Non-Indigenous educators must recognize the need to deepen their understandings of and relationships with Indigenous people and communities as they work toward decolonizing their educational practice (Borden et al., 2018, p. 249).

Three main factors are suggested as being important in facilitating the decolonizing processes of educators: "relationships with Aboriginal peoples and exposure to Aboriginal culture, relationships with allied and resistant non-Aboriginal people, and time on the land" (Root, 2010, p. 112). One study identified that relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people that were "characterized by trust, mutual respect, and open honest dialogue" enhanced valuable learning which supported educators who were engaged in a decolonizing process. Such relationships can be mutually beneficial for both educators and Indigenous community members as educators further develop a "decolonizing consciousness" while learning about issues which affect Indigenous communities (Marker, 2015, p. 247). This decolonizing consciousness then gives educators a clearer lens to view the ways in which Indigenous perspectives and knowledge are integrated into their curriculum, which benefits Indigenous students and, by extension, their communities (Marker, 2015, p. 247).

With all of this in mind, it is important to note that while relationships between non-Indigenous educators and Indigenous communities are important in the process of decolonizing education, educators must be careful not to expect that Indigenous people should be "responsible to teach White people how to act respectfully" (Root, 2010, p. 115). Hall and MacMath (2018) provide further cautions around relationships between non-Indigenous educators and Indigenous communities noting that, "bringing Indigenous *culture* into the school systems without first decolonizing relationships can be used to mask racial logic as the bringing in of Indigenous

culture does not acknowledge white settler privilege, colonial injustices, and practices of erasure" (Battiste & Heaslip, as cited by Hall & MacMath, 2018, p. 93).

By examining the history of Indigenous education nationally and locally, and by reviewing literature about Indigenous education, we find that authentic integration of Indigenous perspectives and knowledge requires educators to engage in an ongoing, personal process of decolonization within their educational practice. Decolonizing education through reflecting on professional practice requires non-Indigenous educators to develop authentic relationships within Indigenous communities. Further, educators must also build support systems of relationships with other decolonizing educators within their school community, as it is within the context of these decolonizing relationships that educators can experience personal and communal growth and learning. Finally, decolonizing relationships can provide educators with strength and confidence, especially those who are struggling to authentically integrate Indigenous perspectives and knowledge within their curriculum due to fear or anxiety.

Methodology and Theoretical Framework

I am growing in my understanding and identification of who I am within the context of my research. Thus, I aim to continue to engage in a reflexive process of examining and defining who and what informs what I know to be true. In this sense, my research paradigm is informed by aspects of my social identity: I am a white, middle class, educated, cisgender female. I am a second-generation Canadian of Dutch, Italian, Irish, and Icelandic ancestry. I was born and raised in Kwantlen territory, and I have developed an awareness of the significance of this in my life over the last several years. This awareness has led to a deep and growing realization of the effects of colonization that afford me certain powers and privileges based on perceptions

associated with aspects of my social identity, even as they strip others of this same level of power and privilege based on negative perceptions related to their social identity. These factors, among others, inform my ontology – what I perceive to be true.

These perceptions accompany me as I navigate my way through my work and research, informed by two epistemologically differing worldviews. I am rooted in a primarily Western understanding of knowledge as a "cultural archive… of histories, artefacts, ideas, texts and/or images, which are classified, preserved, arranged and represented back to the West" (Tuhiwai Smith, 1999, p. 46). From this vantage point, I also endeavor to comprehend conceptualizations of knowledge within a Stó:lō-Coast Salish consciousness, recognized as having existed since time immemorial. These two perspectives are uniquely separate and distinctive, yet compelled toward conciliatory connectedness due to the epistemological resilience inherent within the Stó:lō community despite the prevalence of occidental dominance within their territory.

Cognizant of my positionality and perspective, I aim to recognize what can be learned from the writings of Stó:lō education leaders that can be used by educators to support the Indigenization of the curriculum within S'ólh Téméxw. I am informed by a Stó:lō-centric Indigenous research methodology, using the Stó:lō principle kw'okw'estswitsem tl'os lexw kw'ets kw'e ts (looking back is looking forward) as a guiding conceptual framework (Kovach, 2009, p. 40). This principle "asserts that the lessons and teachings are already there to be found and used in the present context. The future becomes clearer when we draw on the knowledge and richness of our past" (S'ólh Téméxw Stewardship Alliance BC – Collaborative Stewardship Forum, 2020, p. 45).

Utilizing the principle kw'okw'estswitsem tl'os lexw kw'ets kw'e ts as a conceptual framework to guide my inquiry, I look back to lessons and teachings that already exist with the

purpose of translating that pre-existing knowledge for use in the present context, while looking forward in order to support the integration of Indigenous perspectives and knowledge into the curriculum within S'ólh Téméxw. I have used document analysis to discern the lessons and teachings that can help to inform educators as they engage in professional learning in order to develop leadership skills to better support the integration of Indigenous perspectives and knowledge into the curriculum. Jo-ann Archibald (1997), Gwen Point (2015), and Erica Jurgens (2016) each point to the importance of the authentic integration of Indigenous perspectives and knowledge into K-12 classrooms and describe how this can be facilitated through synergistic processes of collaboration and lifelong learning.

Results

Dr. Jo-ann Archibald and the Importance of Professional Learning Through Stories

Archibald (1997) develops a theme in her doctoral dissertation that centers around the complexities of learning through story, noting that there is tension "created from [the] coming together of two seemingly different cultures… which surfaces with issues of academic explicitness and critical analysis and First Nations implicitness and subtlety" (p. 8). She goes on to assert that these tensions may be relieved through gaining understanding wherein "subtleties become explicit with critical thinking" (Archibald, 1997, p. 8). When considered within the broader context of education and learning, it is an educator's commitment to ongoing professional learning through which a deeper understanding of "First Nations implicitness and subtlety" may occur (Archibald, 1997, p. 8). Furthering the notion of the duality or diversity of cultural worldviews which must be recognized by all educators, Archibald (1997) references Tafoya in stating that "…one must be flexible enough to be able to switch worldviews when

appropriate" (Tafoya, 1982 as cited in Archibald, 1997, p. 8). While the ability to switch worldviews can be challenging for many, the capacity to engage in ongoing professional learning related to Indigenous perspectives and knowledge creates opportunities for the recognition of and respect for Indigenous worldviews.

With this in mind, how do non-Indigenous professional learners (as well as Indigenous leaders who, through no fault of their own, might be disconnected from their traditional culture) take steps toward this recognition and respect? In the context of understanding Indigenous literature, Archibald (1997) asserts that merely doing background research and reading are not enough; "for those who are serious, it is more a question of cultural initiation, of involvement and commitment, so that the culture and literature itself becomes more than a mere museum piece, dusty pages, something lifeless" (p. 41). She also explains that "a researcher who enters a First Nations cultural context with little or no cultural knowledge is viewed as a learner…[and that to] … enter a learner/teacher relationship requires time and practice of various cultural protocols before teaching and learning can really occur" (Archibald, 1997, p. 64). Similarly, through acts of "cultural initiation, of involvement and commitment" (Archibald, 1997, p. 41) over time, and the inclusion of the practice of cultural protocols, educators who engage in a process of professional learning will become more well-equipped to facilitate steps towards the authentic integration of Indigenous perspectives and knowledge into the curriculum.

In reflecting on the outcomes of a story-based curriculum project in which she had played a major part, Archibald (1997) states that "the need for teachers' contextual information about First Nations stories, suggestions for establishing working relationships with the community storytellers, and suggestions for story pedagogy was continually reinforced at the curriculum team discussions" (p. 181), at other meetings, and in the piloting process. It is necessary for

educators to acquire contextual information about Indigenous perspectives and knowledge, not only to develop the capacity to understand stories, but other sources of knowledge as well. To this end, educators must also recognize and acknowledge that "sources of fundamental and important First Nations knowledge are the land… spiritual beliefs, and the traditional teachings of Elders" (Archibald, 1997, p. 70), and that these sources may not always be easily accessible or identified by non-Indigenous professional learners. Recognizing these sources as opportunities for professional learning, educators should seek guided engagement with the Land, and appropriate occasions to learn from and about the spiritual beliefs and traditional teachings of Elders so that they may develop or further their understanding of Indigenous perspectives and knowledge. Referencing the learning required for the ethical use of First Nations stories by non-Indigenous educators, Archibald (1997) emphasizes that the "learning process must be guided by local First Nations educators who possess the appropriate cultural knowledge and who are vigilant about keeping sensitive and sacred knowledge where they belong" (p. 184). The assertion that local First Nations educators take the lead in the provision of leadership around the learning process undertaken by educators, leaders or otherwise, is one that has been missed or ignored by educators for much too long. To integrate Indigenous perspectives and knowledge authentically, space must be created for Indigenous educators to lead.

Recognizing the power of mentorship and guidance in professional learning, Archibald (1997) reflects on the potential learning that two non-Indigenous educators might have experienced as they implemented a story-based curriculum that Archibald had helped to develop. She notes that a particular Elder would have "been a helpful mentor" to the two educators, "to guide their understanding about the power of stories and to help them learn cultural ways to make meaning from stories" (Archibald, 1997, p. 202). Archibald (1997) also shares the Elder's

thoughts about mentorship, explaining that the Elder "believes that it is important to coach the teacher, that is, work with her/him individually which is similar to her traditional training" (p. 205). She goes on to share more of the Elder's thoughts, stating that "today, more than ever, teachers need traditionally trained storytellers to help guide them to learning stories and using them with respectful pedagogy" (Archibald, 1997, p. 205). It is apparent to me that in sharing the Elder's thoughts, Archibald is suggesting that educators are capable of integrating Indigenous perspectives and knowledge authentically if they can acquire relevant contextual cultural information in a culturally appropriate and respectful manner.

Dr. Gwen Point and the Importance of Professional Learning through Historical Knowledge

In addition to the acquisition of cultural information, the educator who is engaged in professional learning must also gain an understanding of the historical context surrounding the redesigned curriculum's framework which aims to facilitate the integration of Indigenous perspectives and knowledge throughout a learner's kindergarten to grade twelve education experience. Through her account of her family's intergenerational education experiences, Gwen Point (2015) draws attention to the need to share local history to make "the issues 'real' and not abstract or something that happened a long time ago," noting that "the average Canadian needs to understand why First Nations are struggling in the education system today" (p. 4).

She states that "the history of Aboriginal education needs to be understood, especially by those who are involved in the education system and those who are in decision-making roles" (Point, 2015, p. 14). Point (2015) draws on her personal experiences as an educator emphasizing that "many Canadians have little or no knowledge of Canada's colonial education policies and the impact they have had on First Nations" (p. 29). Recognizing the effects of generations of

governmental assimilative policies on her family's education experiences, and experiencing these effects in her own education, Point (2015) personally understands and asserts that "changing from assimilation to integration will only happen when all involved begin to understand the recent history of colonialism, [the] residential school era, and the lack of Aboriginal involvement in their children's education" (p. 39). She also asserts that "change does not happen overnight and there must be a commitment on all levels of education to address Aboriginal student success in the education system" (Point, 2015, p. 39). This is a challenge that can be met through ongoing professional learning and must be taken up by all educators who aim to foster the authentic integration of Indigenous perspectives and knowledge in the curriculum.

Point (2015) stresses that the call to foster change through understanding the history of Indigenous people in British Columbia must be extended to all those who work in the field of education, stating that they "must know this history in order to better serve current Aboriginal students" (p. 85). Point (2015) highlights the importance of professional learning for educators when, in reflecting on her personal experiences of encountering racism as an educator in a school district, she emphasizes that "addressing stereotyping, racism, and discrimination needs to occur with all school district staff, not just Aboriginal students" (p. 152). In articulating how this professional learning should take place, Point (2015) identifies the need for "in-service training on the history of Aboriginal people" (p. 153). She also suggests that "there should be required courses for teachers" and other professionals who carry out frontline work with people, stating that understanding the intergenerational impact of the residential school system will enable everyone to "better understand the socioeconomic challenges faced by First Nation people and the links to the residential school era" (Point, 2015, p. 155). Point (2015) recognizes that sharing the history of Indigenous education locally and nationally "with both First Nations and non-First

Nations is an important first step in creating a future based on respect and understanding" (p. 166). Point directs educators to engage in an ongoing commitment to professional learning that facilitates looking to the past to gain perspective around the historical context of Indigenous education in British Columbia. In doing so, educators will become better-equipped to facilitate authentic integration of Indigenous perspectives and knowledge in the K-12 curriculum.

Erica Jurgens and the Importance of Professional Learning on/through the Land

In addition to engaging in professional learning in order to understand where one is located within the historical context of Indigenous education, educators who wish to facilitate the authentic integration of Indigenous perspectives and knowledge into curriculum must also recognize the importance of Land in Indigenous education. Jurgens (2017) asserts that, "how education content is framed matters – especially in the construct of place and history" (p. 18). Further, she explains:

> Just as the Euro-western narratives are deeply embedded within ancient history and linguistic connotations, so are Stó:lō's. What is different is that Western narratives have origins elsewhere and are text-driven; Indigenous narratives are, as Linda Tuhiwai Smith (2008) notes, "stored within genealogies, within landscapes, within weavings and carvings, even within personal names" (p. 18).

Jurgens (2017) refers to the learning of Indigenous students in the context of a First Nations Independent School when she states that "…the educative process of Indigenous intellectualism must take place in the context of land and community" (p. 20). I would suggest that this same assertion can be applied within the context of professional learning for educators. Educators who aim to integrate Indigenous perspectives and knowledge in an authentic and respectful manner must also engage in professional learning that enables them to understand the context of the

Land in which they are located. In doing so, they will be better able to frame, or put into context, content related to Indigenous perspectives and knowledge. Jurgens (2017) extends thinking around the importance of Land in understanding Indigenous perspectives and knowledge as she refers to Battiste (2016) who states that "the key tools of [the] reclamation for Indigenous peoples are in their languages, their ancestral relationships, their communal learning of the processes their ancestors used for holding to knowledge and deep relationships with their place, their ecologies and land" (p. 40).

Specifically, it can be inferred from Jurgens' writing that it is important for educators who find themselves located within the Stó:lō Coast-Salish context to recognize the implications of the relationship between the Land and Stó:lō perspectives and knowledge. Referring to her personal communication with Stó:lō Nation cultural historical Naxaxalhts'í (Albert [Sonny] McHalsie), Jurgens (2016) shares his teaching about shxwelí:

> Shxwelí is the word for spirit, for life force and the best way to describe it is the way the late Rosaleen George or Elizabeth Herrling explains it, saying that shxwelí is inside you, it's in your parents it's in your grandparents, it's in your great-great grandparents, it's in your great-great-great grandparents, it's in the rocks, it's in the trees, it's in the grass, it's in the ground. So, when you look at it, basically everything has a shxwelí in it. So, when you look at the Sxwōxwiyám stories, the shxwelí of those ancestors are still inside those rocks, still inside those mountains. That establishes the relationship to the land (p. 23).

Point (2015) states that "spirituality is a natural part of Stó:lō traditions", and recognizes that it has not always been "included or honored by the education system" (p. 65). Educators who aim to authentically integrate Indigenous perspectives and knowledge into their curriculum must hold a recognition of the reality of the Land as imbued with shxwelí within the Stó:lō Coast-Salish

consciousness; and, in this reality, acknowledge and work with the Land as a natural and inspired context for learning.

Archibald (1997) explains that "the term 'land' includes the earth and its relations: the water, and resources of the land" and describes the and as a "natural context for learning stories" (p. 129; 130). She reflects on Stó:lō teaching and learning practices noting that "some of the storytelling training was done on the land. The importance of learning stories from the grandparents about the land, while being on the Land was reinforced" (Archibald, 1997, p. 130). Archibald (1997) provides further insight into the ongoing importance of Land in teaching and learning stating, "The inter-generational responsibility of passing on… cultural knowledge is advocated because… the seamless connection between land and people is still a critical teaching that Elders want continued…" (p. 131). However, while the Land is a ready and available pedagogical resource, the majority of our collective educational efforts in BC continue to be centered around Euro-western, one-way instruction-based pedagogies. Archibald (1997) argues:

> The school as a place for storytelling is not a natural context, as described earlier by the Elders. But it is a place where our children attend. Many of our children do not hear Elders telling stories in cultural contexts. The Elders and the Stó:lō educators continue to hope that the school can be a place where children can hear and learn from stories; that is why they continue to go there to tell stories when they are asked (p. 138).

Recognizing the importance of the centrality of Land in Indigenous ways of teaching and learning, educators must work collaboratively with Indigenous educators and communities to determine how best to integrate Indigenous perspectives and knowledge without disregarding the Land.

The Importance of Collaboration: Bringing it together

Archibald (1997), in describing a process of including Indigenous perspectives in a particular publication she was connected to, quotes an editor of the book who notes, "native people have always been asked for their comments on and contributions to established agenda topics rather than simply being requested to tell their own story" (p. 23). This statement helps to articulate the difference between consultation and collaboration – a distinction that must be recognized and understood by educators when considering ways to authentically integrate Indigenous perspectives and knowledge into curriculum. Archibald (1997) describes a need for Indigenous people to take the lead in setting the agenda and in creating space for collaborative dialogue with education leaders. In this way, she is suggesting that Indigenous people must be involved in creating the space, but that Indigenous people are not solely responsible for fostering an environment where this dialogue can occur:

> The issues and the way that we want to deal with the issues – the types of conversations and talks – must be given space for us to fill. This does not mean that non-Native people should be forever excluded from the conversations. I am suggesting that we, First Nations, need some space to talk: to share our stories in our own way, to create our culturally based discourses, develop our ways to validate our discourses, then open the conversation for others to join (p. 26).

Referencing the use of Indigenous stories by non-Indigenous educators in curriculum, Archibald (1997) states that "ideally, good First Nations storytellers should be hired to tell stories and collaboratively work with the classroom teachers on story pedagogy" (p. 184). It is important to note that Archibald is not simply suggesting that First Nations storytellers be invited to a classroom as a guest storyteller for an hour or that they should be consulted about how to tell a particular story, though there may be value in these approaches. Rather, Archibald is

recommending that storytellers are *hired* as school district employees to work collaboratively with other educators toward a common purpose – the culturally appropriate use of story pedagogy in the classroom and the authentic integration of story pedagogy into curriculum. She goes on to explain that, at the time of her writing, First Nations were "demanding more involvement and control regarding all aspects of First Nations education" (Archibald, 1997, p. 185), indicating that the potential for authentic collaboration would have been difficult to achieve during a time when Indigenous people had little to no "space to fill" in provincial education discourse and decision-making processes.

Archibald's (1997) recommendation for collaboration at the classroom level (p. 184) and her reference to the need for increased First Nations involvement and control in education is echoed eighteen year later by Gwen Point (2015). Though much time had passed, Point also found herself in a position wherein she recognized the need to explain to educators that they must "understand that up until 1994, First Nations did not have a meaningful role in decisions that were made about their children's education"; and, that despite improvements that occurred then, "First Nations [still] need[ed] to have a [greater] functional role in the decision-making and in the governance of education to support First Nation student success" (p. 4). In other words, eighteen years had passed, and there was still the need to educate educators regarding the necessity for collaborative decision-making between First Nations and public-school leaders. Point (2015) furthers the conversation about collaborative decision-making, highlighting the importance of the voice of parents in the process (p. 157). She notes that "parents must be involved in decisions being made to support their children's education" and identifies the BC Ministry of Education 1994 Targeted Fund initiative as "the first time Aboriginal people were asked be part of the decisions about the education programs and services provided for their

children" (Point, 2015, p. 157). She continues on to assert that, in order for Indigenous students to "see themselves reflected in the curriculum", necessary changes must be made that "include involving Aboriginal people in decisions at every level of education" (Point, 2015, p. 162).

Educators must recognize that many of these calls for collaboration stem from the damage of the residential school era when education for Indigenous learners was "determined by the federal government under the Indian Act. First Nations did not have a voice in the decisions being made. There were no consultations or any regard for First Nations language, culture or traditions" (Point, 2015, p. 142). This continued through the era when residential schools were being phased out and Indigenous students were beginning to attend public schools. During this time the "federal government created agreements with the provincial government without input of First Nations leaders and/or the parents of school-aged children" (Point, 2015, p. 33). With this in mind, if educators wish to approach the notion of collaboration with Indigenous communities, they must be able to situate themselves within the context of this history and be cognizant of how they can welcome and foster collaboration going forward. To this end, Point (2015) recalls a conversation she had with an Elder who expressed concern regarding the notion of being involved with a non-Indigenous education system that had caused significant and lasting harm to Indigenous peoples. Recognizing the truth in the Elder's concerns, Point (2015) recalls her response to the Elder, replying that "only when we are meaningfully involved in every level of education can we begin to make meaningful change for our children" (p. 34). Point recognizes the importance of collaboration between public school educators and members of Indigenous communities.

Discussion

The facilitation of the movement toward authentic integration of Indigenous perspectives and knowledge in the K-12 curriculum must be supported by two active and ongoing synergistic processes: 1) a commitment from educators to collaboration with Indigenous communities, and 2) opportunities for professional learning that provide educators with the necessary contextual information for integrating Indigenous perspectives and knowledge.

The BC Ministry of Education describes integration in the redesigned curriculum, noting that Indigenous perspectives and knowledge are now included throughout a learners' "entire learning journey, rather than into specific courses or grade levels" (British Columbia, 2021a). This move is one small step forward in addressing and rectifying Canada's assimilative, destructive, and racist education policies that have affected Indigenous individuals and families since their inception. However, as identified in my analysis of Point's (2015) writing (p.39), in supporting the integration of Indigenous perspectives and knowledge in the K-12 curriculum, educators must also be able to situate the current curriculum within the historical context of Indigenous education within the province of BC; and, in doing so, they must be cognizant of and reflexive towards the necessary need for ongoing change to facilitate authentic integration.

It is evident in reviewing Archibald's (1997) dissertation that the notion of the authentic integration of Indigenous perspectives and knowledge into curriculum is something that she began advocating for long before the concept of integration was adopted into the BC Ministry of Education's discourse around Indigenous education. Archibald points to the need for integration, as opposed to a surface-level inclusion of content, in her criticism of commonly-used methods for including information about Indigenous perspectives and knowledge in the public school curriculum. This is clear when she states that "common approaches to teaching about Indian

cultures were described as ‘museum and heritage’ at the elementary level, and ‘discipline and issues’ at the secondary level” (Archibald, 1997, p. 95). Archibald (1997) goes on to explain that these approaches “tended to reinforce stereotypes because of the superficial treatment of culture” that wrongly framed Indigenous people as “objects of study” (p. 95). This approach of simply adding or inserting information about Indigenous people to curriculum acts as a barrier to authentic integration in that it provides a framework for educators to simply ‘check the box’ of Indigenous content inclusion rather than doing the decolonizing work of authentic integration. In my analysis of Archibald’s 1997 writing it is evident that, in her context of working with Indigenous stories in curriculum, Archibald places high value on the educational benefits of relationship building between educators and those who hold cultural knowledge in Indigenous communities (p. 41, 64, 181). It can be understood from Archibald’s 1997 dissertation research that to teach Indigenous perspectives and knowledge authentically is to move towards a multi-faceted approach to the integration of Indigenous perspectives and knowledge that includes educators’ commitment to developing an understanding of the pedagogical, historical, and cultural context wherein that content originates through teacher-learner relationships with Indigenous knowledge holders (p. 64). Thus, it is imperative that educators engage in professional learning and collaborative relationships that afford them opportunities to locate themselves pedagogically, historically, and in relation to Indigenous culture, in order to provide an authentic representation of Indigenous perspectives and knowledge to learners. To this end, educators must work alongside and collaborate with Indigenous educators, community members, and external experts to determine how pedagogical, historical, and cultural content should be integrated into curriculum to ensure that it is done in a way that respects relevant protocols and

existing teaching and learning systems, while also being careful not to perpetuate the "superficial treatment of culture" as identified and experienced by Archibald (1997, p. 95).

Meanwhile, Gwen Point's research helps us to understand that in collaborating toward authentic integration, educators must pay particular attention to the history of education in BC which has led to a dyad of teaching and learning systems within Indigenous societies. Point (2015) teaches that "First Nation[s] people had an education system that provided them with skills and knowledge to support their families and communities" and that "this education system was compromised and dismissed, and government education policies removed the children from their families, disrupting and crippling Aboriginal families" (p. 24). While Point refers to it in the past tense with specific reference to the residential school system, it seems to me that in many First Nation communities a more subtle system that incorporates key elements of the earlier assimilation policies is very much still functioning, albeit within a different context than in pre-contact Indigenous societies. For the purposes of authentic integration of Indigenous perspectives and knowledge in curriculum, it is important for educators to look back and to acknowledge the historical roots of Indigenous education in BC as a means of understanding the real and current issues that exist today (Point, p. 14). In doing so, educators must also look forward toward acknowledging and understanding local Indigenous education systems and their pedagogical, historical, and cultural context in the present and future education environment. Point (2015) shares that "in many First Nation communities today, elders have encouraged their children and grandchildren to go to school and get an education, and to take what they have learned in the education system to help their people" (p. 35). She goes on to explain that "at the same time, they are now also encouraged to carry on their traditions. The young people today are encouraged 'to learn how to walk in two worlds in a good way'" (Point, 2015, p. 35). It is

important for educators to recognize this context as the reality for many Indigenous learners in BC's K-12 education system. My research highlights the value of educators reflecting on this encouragement given by Elders, when considering the importance of authentic integration of Indigenous perspectives and knowledge in the curriculum. Similarly, Archibald (1997) also shares the advice of Elders stating that "many Elders have said many times [that] one must learn to 'live in two worlds'" (p. 68). Referring to Indigenous learners who pursue university education, she is cautious, noting that:

> First Nations people are encouraged by Elders and local community to 'get more education.' But becoming educated in mainstream institutions can create a chasm between the university educated one and others who were not educated in this way" (Archibald, 1997, p. 67).

Educators must consider this reality throughout the K-12 curriculum and question whether this chasm would exist, or might it at least be less pronounced, if Indigenous perspectives and knowledge were authentically integrated into curriculum by educators who engage in professional learning and collaboration with Indigenous communities.

It should also be noted that Archibald does not draw a comparison between those who are university-educated and those who are without formal education in a western context; rather she contrasts university-educated learners with those who were educated in a different way. The legitimacy of different ways of obtaining education must also be recognized by K-12 educators for authentic integration to occur. The integration of Indigenous perspectives and knowledge is not merely about including content about Indigenous people and cultures broadly throughout the curriculum; rather, the authentic integration of Indigenous perspectives and knowledge must

recognize and create space for Indigenous learners who are walking in “two worlds in a good way” (Point, 2015, p.35).

In creating this space, educators must be able to recognize and work toward an understanding of the pedagogical, historical, and cultural contexts that exist within Indigenous education systems, keeping in mind the differences in the education systems between differing Indigenous communities. That is to say, educators who aim to do the work of creating space for Indigenous learners to walk in two worlds in a good way must also engage in the work of looking back and seeking to understand the history of Indigenous education in BC so that they may interpret and contribute to the present educational context wherein authentic integration of Indigenous perspectives and knowledge is required. Jurgens (2017) notes that “throughout the late 1980’s to present-day, there have been attempts to integrate Indigenous content into the curriculum through teachers’ guides” (p. 5). She goes on to state that “although these teacher guides [were] more culturally inclusive, generic packaged curriculum kits cannot serve all Indigenous peoples because we are not a homogenous group” (Jurgens, 2017, p. 5). Educators who engage in professional learning and the work of looking back so that they may look forward, and who are aware of the pedagogical, historical, and cultural contexts of the Land they are on, will be better-equipped to authentically integrate Indigenous perspectives and knowledge into their curriculum. To achieve this, educators must recognize the importance of connection to Land. Jurgens (2016) cites Battiste (2016b) in emphasizing that “the key tools of… reclamation for Indigenous peoples are in their languages, their ancestral relationships, their communal learning of the processes their ancestors used for holding to knowledge and deep relationships with their place, their ecologies and land” (p. 4) (Jurgens, 2016, p. 40).

Recognizing the importance of authenticity and integrity in the integration of Indigenous perspectives and knowledge into the BC curriculum, and in understanding the centrality of Land as the epicenter of Stó:lō ways of knowing, doing, and being, I consider the plausibility of achieving authentic and integrous representations of dynamic Indigenous perspectives and knowledge within the rigidity of an often bureaucratic education system. There is an urgent need for educators to adopt the characteristics outlined in authentic leadership theory for the meaningful and respectful promotion and support of the integration of Indigenous perspectives and knowledge within the K-12 curriculum in BC. Educators must recognize the various factors that have contributed to the creation of the new mandate for the integration of Indigenous perspectives and knowledge into the curriculum in BC as a basis for understanding the current disparity in educational achievement. Educators who aim to promote and engage with Indigenous perspectives and knowledge in meaningful and authentic ways must participate in ongoing self-reflection, engage in reciprocal, collaborative relationships, and develop personally and professionally as lifelong learners. To this end, educators should pursue opportunities, some of which are listed in the last section of this paper, to engage in Stó:lō stories and narratives as ways of learning (as per Archibald) about Stó:lō history and culture and spirituality (as per Point) with an eye to guided Land based experiential learning (as per Jurgen) so that they can more fully understand, and therefore be better equipped to, integrate Indigenous perspectives and knowledge authentically into the K-12 curriculum.

Implications and Recommendations

Through the BC Ministry of Education's redesigned curriculum, educators have been provided with a framework for the integration of Indigenous perspectives and knowledge.

However, in order to authentically integrate these perspectives and knowledge into an education system that is built on Eurocentric ways of knowing, educators must also be provided with resources and professional learning opportunities that support the processes of decolonizing. Challenging entrenched colonial narratives and the "power and privilege of some individuals in Canadian society" within a classroom setting can prove to be an isolating task for many educators (Barman & Battiste, 1995, p. 50). Therefore, in order to support educators in this work, it is suggested that education leaders guide educators and schools to "revisit their educational mission statements to establish where, when, and how decolonization can become the educational project" (Barman & Battiste, 1995, p. 50). When a larger group of educators in a school come together to form a critical decolonizing cohort, opportunities for "important change at the school level" can be created (Borden et al., 2018, p. 244). These critical decolonizing cohorts could serve to correct a lack of awareness among educators regarding the integration of Indigenous perspectives and knowledge (Montero & Dénommé-Welch, 2014, p. 138).

At times, the work of decolonizing education can cause educators to feel overwhelmed and fearful (MacMath & Hall, 2018, p. 103). Some educators experience "feelings of anxiety and fear" and are worried about "making harmful mistakes … [and] exposing their own ignorance" (Root, 2010, p. 111). Pete et al. (2013) shares that, in her experience, pre-service teachers "are 'afraid' of being perceived as ignorant, or racist" (p. 111). She postulates that a remedy to this fear is found in engaging in "experiences with 'the other' in order to gain cultural competency" (p. 111). I agree, and from my perspective, this remedy is consistent with the recommendations and findings of the unpublished academic writings of Archibald, Point and Jurgens. Gaining cultural competency in community with other educators, such as accessing the resources and educational experiences mentioned in the following section of this paper, can be considered a

form of collaboration and should be recognized as professional learning. Feelings of anxiety and fear can be reduced when educators work together to possess a "willingness to embrace vulnerability and learn from [their] mistakes", in their life-long decolonizing journey (Root, 2010, p. 112; Hall & MacMath, 2018, p. 103). It is suggested that "such relationships may provide an outlet to talk about embarrassing mistakes, work through contradictory ideas, and gain new knowledge" (Root, 2010, p. 114).

Looking Forward

My literature review and comparative analysis of the unpublished writings of Gwen Point, Jo-Ann Archibald, and Erica Jurgens provides confirmation that there are a lack of resources and professional learning opportunities available to support educators in the integration of authentic and culturally appropriate Indigenous perspectives and knowledge into the K-12 curriculum. My research leads me to believe that engaging in ongoing professional learning and direct collaborative communication with local Indigenous communities, as can be accomplished through existing or carefully establishing relationships between school districts and local First Nations and other Indigenous organizations, is the best way to ensure that the redesigned curriculum will be implemented in a respectful, appropriate, and authentic way.

In hindsight, and with the passing of time since Archibald (1997), Point (2015), and Jurgens (2016) completed their writings, it is apparent to me that educators must engage directly with Indigenous history, pedagogy, and culture – not merely as a means of looking into the past, but (as Archibald suggests) as a way to look forward and to recognize and acknowledge Stó:lō perspectives and knowledge, Stó:lō people, and the Land and environment that they have called home for millennia, and that they consider to be filled with the sentient spirits and memories of their ancestors. Educators must also work to develop genuine competencies in the history of the

Stó:lō people (as Point suggests) so they can come to appreciate not only their traditional and ancient culture, but also the ways in which settler colonialism and racism have impacted Stó:lō people over the past 150 years. Finally, (as per Jurgens) educators must build relationships with Indigenous people and organizations so they can begin to shift the sites and nexus of learning out of the classroom and onto the Land. There, as all three of the authors I have reviewed argue, educators will find themselves in a space that is conducive to decolonial thinking and epistemological shifts: for it is in the landscape, connected to the Land Stó:lō people refer to as S'ólh Téméxw, that educators will be able to build a new appreciation and respect for Indigenous people and the Lands they hold title to.

The content is there, in the Land, and educators need to learn from it. Specifically, educators teaching and learning within Stó:lō territory can learn about the Land, S'ólh Téméxw, by participating in one or more of the several place names tours offered by Stó:lō Nation's tourism department. Further, educators can grow in their understanding of S'ólh Téméxw and Stó:lō perspectives and knowledge by reading the many print resources published by Stó:lō organizations that are mentioned in this paper. All of these resources are available in the libraries in local school districts, as well as in the library and archives at the Stó:lō Research and Resource Management Centre in Chilliwack, BC, along with a vast selection of other print, audio, and video sources. Educators can attend ceremonies at the educational Longhouse located at the Coqualeetza grounds in Chilliwack, BC; some ceremonies are open to the public, such as the annual Remembrance Day ceremony, and provide local residents with the opportunity to participate in ceremony through observation and being present. In addition to this, educators can also participate in numerous other educational opportunities that are made available through Stó:lō Nation, the Stó:lō Research and Resource Management Centre, the Stó:lō Tribal Council,

and other Stó:lō organizations. In addition to all that is offered to the general public by these Stó:lō organizations, educators should also look to local school districts for relevant professional development workshops and experiences which are related to Land, Stó:lō narratives, Stó:lō history, and Indigenous education generally.

These things being said, educators should not expect that Indigenous communities will necessarily have the capacity to immediately begin working with educators one on one to provide them with guidance and resources. It is vital, therefore, that educators work to develop and strengthen competencies through several of the professional learning opportunities mentioned here prior to approaching Indigenous communities for partnerships, in order to show their commitment to the initiative and their dedication to making the emotional labour and time burdens on Indigenous Knowledge Keepers as light as possible. Educators must engage in a process of looking back, and of locating themselves within the historical, pedagogical, and cultural context of Indigenous education in BC, so that they may look forward to authentic integration, rooted in an understanding of the pedagogies of the Land.

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